# The Ultimate Construction Guide - Understanding General Contracting Services

Managing any size construction project, from an entire custom home to a simple remodel, is a monumental task. For many, coordinating the myriad of details such as selecting the trades, scheduling the inspections, and everything in between is simply too much. This is where construction management services become useful. General Contracting Services Explained offers the client an understanding of the process by transforming the home building or remodeling project from the idea stage to the completed project. The construction management professional organizes the many tasks, simplifies the flow, and builds to the clients standards and within the bounds of the construction trade requirements.

## What is General Contracting?

General Contracting is the supervision of all facets of the construction process. A General Contractor is all of the following in one: a construction project manager, construction project director, and the construction point of contact. They also are responsible for staffing, material supply, obtaining the necessary permits to proceed, and the quality of work done throughout the construction process.

Suppose you're hiring a General Contractor in Sherwood Park. In that case, you want someone able to deal directly with all the various subcontractors. Subcontractors deal with trades that are much more focused. As an example, roofers will deal purely with the roofs, whereas electricians deal with the electrical work.

# Why You Should Leave It to the Pros

Watching a few videos and doing a bit of handiwork sounds easy and fun, and many people think that the internet can give them the tools to handle certain home handiwork. People can surely repaint rooms, or replace the knobs on a cabinet. However, these are small projects. Big, large scale projects need the attention of someone who has training and experience that the average person does not. General contractors handle the elements that most homeowners do not have the time or the training to deal with. These include the local building codes, working with a construction schedule that requires large machinery, and dealing with the construction of the building itself.

# Managing a Construction Project: Four Important Phases

To construct a building, or manage a construction project, you need to manage four significant phases. A knowledgeable contractor will manage all four vital phases of the project.

## 1. The Planning and Design Phase

It all begins with a plan. A good contractor will work with the clients/owners to define the boundaries and prefers construction design. The contractor will also provide a construction schedule and estimate building costs. During this phase of managing the project, a good contractor will work with the clients to select construction materials. This is a great time to discuss the selection of building materials that will provide long-term cost savings and that are also sustainable, and energy efficient.

## 2. Permitting and Approvals

Every construction project needs to have all required permits approved by the local government before the construction process can begin. This is especially pertinent for full home renovations. Your contractor is responsible for obtaining permits and ensuring compliance with local regulations regarding construction and zoning so that you do not face fines or have to tear down the project.

## 3. Construction Execution and Supervision

You can finally sit back and watch the beautiful transformation of your property. The contractor oversees every process on the site, from the labor to the logistics of materials and subcontractors. The contractor will also supervise the scheduled subcontractors and the various activities that occur on the construction site and ensure that the work is on par with the required standards and is up to the industry benchmarks.

## 4. Project Completion and Final Inspection

The final phases of construction shift the focus towards the site's final aesthetics. The contractor will oversee the final construction process rounding and ensure that it meets the required standards. The contractor will finalize the project through your final confirmation by performing the final inspections and ensuring that all final construction touches are completed and that all required warranties and documentation have been provided and signed.

# Common Construction Difficulties

The construction process intrinsically holds a myriad of difficulties. Project budgeting within the construction industry is filled with a variety of difficulties. The construction process itself is almost guaranteed to present you with dilemmas that range from sudden escalation for the cost of raw materials to the unexpected discovery of significant water damage hidden behind old walls. An experienced contractor will implement cost control strategies to help ensure that all construction progress is within a reasonable budget.

Frequent building delays can be a nightmare. Weather, global supply chain issues, and even your subcontractor's scheduling issues can build up all sorts of problems and add to the completion backlog. Hiring a licensed, well-connected professional construction manager can improve project completion and help alleviate many of the scheduled backlog issues. They assist crews and help manage subcontract schedules.

Hiring a professional construction manager also helps with the ever-changing, regional, and local building codes. If you want to hire a basement development contractor, for example, Edmonton has very specific codes and regulations for municipal building practices. Ceiling heights, fire separations, and even egress windows are very strict building requirements. Certified contractors can help you avoid violations that are both a safety concern and will cause major legal issues in the future.

# How to Choose the Right Contractor for Your Project

Building your own custom project is one of the most important things you will take the time and money to do in your life, so make sure you choose the right construction project partner. The first step is to always check and verify their licenses and insurance to make sure they actually can build what you want. Check their customer reviews and ask for past project portfolios to make sure their style matches what you are wanting and for you to have a clear expectation.

Being your own contractor is a large responsibility, and you need to be sure to ask the right questions for the responsibility you are taking. What is the expected completion time? Budgeting is important for any project. What factors could affect the final project cost? What do you stand behind? A good construction project partner will answer all of these and give you confidence in the project you are undertaking, so make sure you reach out to us and let us help you for your build.

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

**1. What's the difference between a general contractor and a subcontractor?** General contractors see construction projects through from start to finish, including management of the budget, schedule, and quality. Subcontractors perform specialized jobs, such as plumbing or electrical, and are contracted by the general contractor.

**2. Do general contractors take care of getting building permits?** Yes. A good general contractor will draw up plans, submit them to the city, and secure all building and trade permits before starting.

**3. How do contractors handle going over budget?** Most contractors give a detailed budget estimate and usually include a contingency of 10 - 20 percent. They will let you know in advance if a planned action will have a cost. They will provide a “change order” for you to sign if they are going to spend unplanned funds.

**4. Will I save money if I manage my own home renovation?** You will save the general contractor’s fee by managing your own project, but you will pay a higher cost for mistakes, delays, and purchasing materials at a higher price.

**5. What should I expect to see in a contractor's portfolio?** You should see projects that are similar to the size and scope of the project that you are interested in. You will see a variety of finished projects that are of consistent quality, and you should ask if they have experience in your envisioned renovation.